Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 /046 W

R 290555Z MAR 78 FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK TO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2323 AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR AMEMBASSY MANILA AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: EAIR, TH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: THAI-INDONESIAN RIFT

- 1. FOR WHAT IT MAY BE WORTH, THE RTG'S MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS ON MARCH 28 FORMALLY DENIED THAT A CIVAIR DISPUTE HAS ARISEN BETWEEN THAILAND AND INDONESIA. DENAIL WAS, HOWEVER, DISINGENOUS. THAI INTERNATIONAL AIRWAYS (TAI) OFFICIALS CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF WEEK AGO THAT GOI HAS OBJECTED TO TIA PLANS TO AUBSTITUTE NEW AIRBUS FOR AGING DC-8'S ON ITS SIX WEEKLY SERVICES TO JAKARTA, THREE OF WHICH GO ON TO BALI. RTG CIVAIR OFFICIALS INSIST THIS IS AN "AIRLINE CAPACITY PROBLEM," NOT A "GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT ROUTE PROBLEM."
- 2. EARLIER IN MONTH GARUDA, WHICH HAS AUTHORITY TO OPERATE SIX WEEKLY SERVICES TO AND THROUGH BANGKOK, ANNOUNCED THAT ON APRIL 1 IT WILL TERMINATE THE TWO SERVICES IT HAS ACTUALLY BEENOPERATING TO THE MIDDLE EAST VIA BANGKOK. RTG OFFICIALS SAY THAT GARUDA TRAFFIC ON THIS ROUTE CONSISTS ALMOST ENTIRELY OF MUSLIM PILGRIMS MAKING HADJ TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MECCA, AND THAT IT IS MORE ECONOMIC FOR GARUDA TO FLY TO SAUDI ARABIA VIA SINGAPORE RATHER THAN VIA BANGKOK.

3. TAI OFFICIALS ARE, AS A RESULT, HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT PURCHASING ADDITIONAL AIRBUS SCHEDULED FOR USE ON INDONESIAN SERVICES. FAILURE TO BUY AIRCRAFT WOULD BE LOSS TO U.S. FIRMS WHO SUPPLY ENGINES, AIR CONDITIONING

SYSTEMS, ETC., FOR AIRBUS. WHITEHOUSE

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